

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 14, 2017

Agenda Item: Madison River No Wake Administrative Rule

Division: Enforcement

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 45 Min

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Background: Jonathan and Marianne Klein submitted a petition for a no wake restriction on a 1.3-mile section of the Madison River between The North Ennis Lake Bridge and the Madison Dam. The proposal restricts the Madison River to no-wake motorized boating from the North Ennis Lake Bridge at the northeast end of Ennis Lake to the Madison Dam. Petitioners feel this regulation is necessary to address social desires for all varieties of water-based recreation users and to address safety concerns through the narrow canyon.

Public Involvement Process & Results: FWP's public comment period for this proposal ran for 29 days and ended on February 17. A public hearing was also held at the FWP Region 3 meeting room on February 15, at which 13 members of the public signed in and gave comment, 7 in opposition, and 6 in support. A total of 108 written comments were received, 64 in opposition, 44 in support, and 2 that did not state an opinion for or against or were not relative to the language proposed.

Alternatives and Analysis: The Commission can adopt or not adopt the rule. If the Commission doesn't adopt the rule, the area will remain as it currently is without a no wake zone. If the Commission adopts the rule as proposed, the Madison River will be limited to a no wake zone from the North Ennis Lake Bridge to 600 feet above the Madison Dam. Several commenters that were in opposition to the proposed rule commented that they would support an alternative no wake zone on either side of the North Ennis Lake Bridge as they believed this area is dangerous and has safety concerns. Additionally, this stretch of water could be restricted to no-wake during certain times of the day.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: The Department takes a neutral stance on this petition. The Department recognizes that greater than wake speed boating in this channel could potentially increase the chances of a boating accident. However, considering public comments, this restriction could reduce opportunity for water based recreation. Several alternatives were suggested during public comment that could address some of these issues and serve as a compromise. Further evaluation/study of this area would be appropriate before the Department makes a recommendation. Therefore, there are two motions for the Commission to consider. The Department will be satisfied with whatever action the Commission takes on this proposal.

Proposed Motion:

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission **adopt** administrative rule limiting the Madison River to a no wake zone from the North Ennis Lake Bridge to 600 feet above the Madison Dam.

Or

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission **not adopt** administrative rule limiting the Madison River to a no wake zone from the North Ennis Lake Bridge to 600 feet above the Madison Dam.